

REMARKS

I. Introduction – Claim Status

This Request for Reconsideration is submitted in response to the outstanding Office Action of June 16, 2003, and is accompanied by a Petition for Extension of Time with fee payment authorization.

The Office Action indicates that claims 12-15 and 17-19 are pending, of which all but claim 19 are withdrawn from consideration. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration in view of the herewith presented remarks.

II. The 35 USC §103(a) Rejection

The Office Action rejects claim 19 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fischer (US Patent No. 5,422,953) in view of Denno et al. (US Patent No. 5,493,613). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection at least on the grounds that neither of these references qualifies as prior art to Applicant's claimed invention.

More specifically, the present application claims priority to US application Serial No. 07/794,112, filed Nov. 15, 1991, now U.S. Patent No. 5,453,601, which Applicant submits fully supports claim 19 of the instant application. Applicant further notes that claim 19 corresponds to a combination of limitations recited in claims 13, 14 and 15 of US Patent No. 6,122,625, which is a related divisional application of the applications to which the instant invention claims priority. Both Fischer and Denno

were filed after the filing date of the original ancestor application to which the instant application claims priority, and thus Fischer and Denno cannot be considered prior art against Applicant's invention as claimed herein.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the §103(a) rejection of claim 19 should be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

In view of the above remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejections is respectfully requested and allowance of all pending claims is respectfully submitted.

If any outstanding issues remain, or if the Examiner has any suggestions for expediting allowance of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

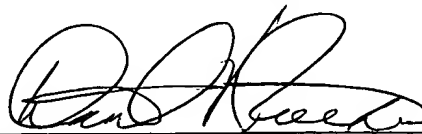
The Examiner's time and attention to this matter are greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: December 16, 2003

By:



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